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Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions, respectively, in New York from 24 to 26 February 2010 and in Geneva from 7 to 9 July 2010. The Board focused its deliberations during its sessions on the following substantive agenda items: (a) conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and (b) follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

The first agenda item was discussed by the Board at its fifty-second session in July 2009 and a set of recommendations were provided to the Secretary-General. The Board, however, felt strongly that it was important to continue providing the Secretary-General with a new set of recommendations prior to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be held in May 2010.

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Consequently, the Board continued its deliberations on the item entitled "Conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference" during its fifty-third session in New York. The Board recommended that the Secretary-General continue to provide his strong support for the political momentum in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation leading up to the Review Conference, and encourage States to ensure high-level political commitment to, and participation at, the Review Conference. It also urged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to send positive messages prior to the Review Conference and encourage States to propose concrete steps for a multilateral process in nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and for implementation of existing norms. The Board also urged the Secretary-General to stress to both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States their common responsibility in having zero tolerance for proliferation by either States or non-State actors, as well as in advancing nuclear disarmament. It was also felt that the Secretary-General should acknowledge the progress already achieved, especially in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and in States reversing their nuclear status. At its fifty-fourth session in Geneva, the Board took time to exchange views on the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference.

Regarding the second agenda item on the follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, the Board had an in-depth exchange of views on the issue during both its sessions. The Board recommended that the Secretary-General remind States to fully implement the recommendations made in the 2002 United Nations study and call the attention of relevant international and regional organizations to the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education. The Board encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his advocacy role in promoting the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education whenever possible. The Board also felt that the Secretary-General should encourage Governments to establish robust infrastructures to handle disarmament and non-proliferation studies and to regularly submit reports in connection with disarmament education.

As the Board of Trustees for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the Board adopted the Institute's 2010 programme and budget and approved, for submission to the General Assembly, the report of the Director of the Institute on its activities from August 2009 to July 2010, as well as the proposed programme of work and budget for 2010 and 2011. The Board also urged the Secretary-General to use all the influence at his disposal to secure the increase of the subvention in the regular budget of the United Nations for the Institute to fully fund all core staff costs.

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions, respectively, in New York from 24 to 26 February 2010 and in Geneva from 7 to 9 July 2010. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 38/183 O. The report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), approved by the Advisory Board serving as its Board of Trustees, has been submitted in a separate document (A/65/177).

2. Carlo Trezza of Italy chaired the two sessions of the Board in 2010.

3. The present report summarizes the Board's deliberations during the two sessions and the specific recommendations it conveyed to the Secretary-General.

II. Substantive discussions and recommendations

A. Conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

4. The Board had already discussed the agenda item at its fifty-second session in July 2009 and a set of recommendations were presented to the Secretary-General. Nonetheless, the Board had agreed to continue its consideration of the agenda item at its next session, due to continuing developments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Furthermore, the Board had felt strongly that it was important to provide the Secretary-General with a new set of recommendations prior to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons scheduled to be held in May 2010.

5. Three Board members, Donald Mahley, H. M. G. S. Palihakkara and François Rivasseau, presented food-for-thought papers on the agenda item at the fifty-third session.

6. The Board expressed appreciation and support for the active engagement and leadership of the Secretary-General on disarmament matters. There were again strong expressions of support for the Secretary-General's five-point plan on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of October 2008, and his subsequent proposals, as well as for the need for the Secretary-General to maintain the momentum of his engagement.

7. A strong message by the Secretary-General on the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was considered to be of vital political importance with a positive effect on the non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. It was also suggested that the Secretary-General do all within his powers to assist in maintaining the political momentum for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament already under way aiming at a nuclear-weapon-free world.

8. Although the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was seen as the activity of its States parties, the Board commented that the United Nations could capitalize on its institutional recognition by taking the lead on some issues. Views were expressed that the success or failure of the Review Conference would have a broader impact on the international system beyond the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons regime and would affect the very idea of

international governance and multilateralism. Several members also stressed that progress should be made on all three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and that it was also crucial to maintain equilibrium between them.

9. Some members expressed concerns about nuclear proliferation and the reaffirmation of nuclear deterrence doctrines in some parts of the world, as well as disappointment at the slow pace in nuclear disarmament. While some cases of proliferation may have a different sense of urgency for various parties, it was emphasized that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had zero tolerance for proliferation by both State and non-State actors. Mention was made of the fact that selective responses could put into question the benefits of joining the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

10. It was also mentioned that, while disarmament did not exist in a vacuum and should occur in a security environment where stability could be achieved without armaments, neither could non-proliferation measures exist in a disarmament vacuum.

11. Comments were also made on the importance of pursuing further clarifications on doctrines on no-first-use as well as "sole purpose". In this connection, some members mentioned that the concept of negative security assurances should be strengthened.

12. The importance of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was stressed by a number of Board members. Also stated was the need for improving nuclear technology for peaceful applications and proliferation resistant technologies, without danger of clandestine nuclear programmes. It was stated, however, that such technologies would require robust international cooperation as well as the development of special safeguards systems. The necessity of adapting the non-proliferation regime to changing realities was also expressed.

13. Several members reiterated the need to strongly encourage the United States of America and the Russian Federation to conclude an agreement on a follow-up to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Views were expressed that further reductions in those nuclear arsenals could open the way to wider commitments.

Recommendations

14. **The Board made the following recommendations which were presented to the Secretary-General before the 2010 Review Conference:**

(a) **The Secretary-General should continue to provide his strong support for the political momentum in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation leading up to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;**

(b) **The Secretary-General should encourage States to ensure high-level political commitment to, as well as participation at, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;**

(c) **The Secretary-General should continue his efforts to send positive messages prior to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and encourage States to propose concrete**

steps for multilateral process in nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and for implementation of existing norms;

(d) The Secretary-General should stress to both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States their common responsibility in having zero tolerance for proliferation by either States or non-State actors, as well as in advancing nuclear disarmament;

(e) The Secretary-General should acknowledge the progress already achieved, especially in the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and in States reversing their nuclear status. He should also reaffirm the relevance of disarmament education in the context of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

B. Follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education

15. For its second agenda item, the Board exchanged views on the follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education during both its sessions. In particular, recommendation 30 of the 2002 United Nations study (A/57/124) read: "in the context of its current mandate, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters is encouraged to consider periodically follow-up action related to disarmament and non-proliferation education". Since it had already been eight years since the study was published, it was deemed timely for the Board to deliberate on the topic, especially given the rising interest of civil society concerning disarmament and non-proliferation matters, particularly nuclear disarmament.

16. At its fifty-third session, a food-for-thought paper on the topic was presented by Board member Kate Dewes. At the same meeting, the Board also heard a presentation by an expert, William Potter, Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar Professor of Nonproliferation Studies and Director of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute for International Studies, on the issue of disarmament education.

17. The Board had an in-depth exchange of views on the agenda item. It was suggested that the Secretary-General use all opportunities, especially at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to promote and stress the importance of disarmament education.

18. Some members pointed out, however, that disarmament and non-proliferation issues were not a priority in many parts of the world and that there were difficulties in generating public interest. In particular, views were expressed that disarmament and non-proliferation issues were broad and that interest in the issues differed considerably among States and that, therefore, disarmament education did not have the same conceptions everywhere.

19. Many members stressed the need for stronger efforts on the part of Governments to train and educate not only Government officials in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation but also to raise the awareness of parliamentarians, educators, scientists, researchers and the military to disarmament issues on which their respective fields could have a significant impact. Several

Board members also underlined the necessity of military education to include components of disarmament education.

20. In connection with the uses of technology, opinions were expressed on the various modern communication tools that could be used to enhance disarmament education, such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and disarmament-related documentaries/films and games. Some members reiterated the need to enlist the help of celebrities in raising public awareness of the issues.

21. Other noteworthy suggestions included the need to involve other international agencies, notably the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in order to reach the youth on disarmament education, the importance of enhancing networking as a way to improving and promoting disarmament education, and the appointment of a messenger of peace for disarmament education. It was also widely suggested that the issue of disarmament education be raised at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

22. The Board continued its deliberations on the follow-up action on the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education at its fifty-fourth session. The Board was thus able to have a second round of in-depth discussions on the subject. At the same session, a food-for-thought paper was presented by Board member Monica Herz.

23. The Board expressed satisfaction at the inclusion, for the first time in action 22 in the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, of consensus language encouraging all States to implement the recommendations contained in the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, in order to advance the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

24. Many members reiterated that disarmament and non-proliferation education presently attracted little interest and thus needed to be packaged in a way that would generate interest in more countries. It was also stressed that the focus of disarmament and non-proliferation education should encompass both weapons of mass destruction and conventional disarmament issues in order to generate interest as well as raise public awareness of the issues. The importance of connecting disarmament education with the needs of the local environment and with the broader issue of violence and arms control was also emphasized.

25. The need to update disarmament education and the way in which it is disseminated, particularly through the use of new technologies, was again stressed. In particular, the need to educate a younger audience, including those in the secondary school, was also mentioned. It was suggested that new technologies, including non-violent video games, could serve as useful tools for disarmament education and stigmatize violence, with a "bottom-up" approach.

26. The Board discussed the question of which other audiences to target, such as the industrial community and military establishments, in addition to schools, academia and media organizations. An important audience mentioned was parliamentarians, particularly in view of the fact that they were the ones that would ratify any disarmament agreements. A suggestion was made for a letter to be sent by

the Secretary-General to Governments encouraging them to implement the recommendations of the 2002 United Nations study. In the case of members of the military, it was stated that focus should be put on providing them with education on humanitarian law aspects, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation.

27. The media was seen as an important vehicle for disarmament education. Instruction techniques were also meaningful and varied: media, Internet, comic books, available in various languages. The translation and accessibility of mediums to instruction were considered a key aspect of disarmament education.

28. It was mentioned that UNIDIR could play a major role. However, the need to find a common and acceptable language was emphasized. It was suggested that a UNIDIR lexicon be made available in all official United Nations languages, in order to promote a common understanding and that it be updated and printed or posted on the Institute's website.

29. UNESCO and its national commissions, were also considered to be very useful in the dissemination of information on disarmament education. It was also suggested that resources, including books, could be prepared and made available by UNESCO to universities around the world in order to create a common language regarding disarmament. Other United Nations agencies and international organizations, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the World Health Organization, as well as regional organizations, could also be encouraged to develop their capacities to disseminate disarmament education.

30. It was also proposed that working together with the ministries of education, as well as the presidents of universities, in various countries could help to create disarmament education programmes in the curricula of schools in their respective countries.

31. The importance for Governments to establish robust structures to handle disarmament and non-proliferation issues, including the need to establish career paths for individuals who have focused on disarmament and non-proliferation studies, was stressed. It was also mentioned that States could consider providing assistance in developing disarmament and non-proliferation education programmes.

32. The Board agreed that the 2002 United Nations study was still valid. The need for full implementation of the recommendations made in 2002, with particular reference to reporting, was emphasized, having in mind the priorities that have been devised in the report. A possible reprint of the study, with a new foreword by the Secretary-General, was also suggested.

33. The introduction of a new resolution in the First Committee on the issue of disarmament education was proposed. It was also suggested that those States which have been traditionally attached to the issue should continue their efforts to revive interest in the topic of disarmament education.

Recommendations

34. **The Board made the following recommendations:**

(a) **The Secretary-General could remind States to implement fully the recommendations made in the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and**

non-proliferation education, and call the attention of other relevant international and regional organizations to the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education;

(b) **The Secretary-General is encouraged to continue his advocacy role in promoting the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education whenever possible, and to consider making a major statement on this issue at the appropriate occasion;**

(c) **The Secretary-General should encourage Governments to establish robust infrastructures to handle disarmament and non-proliferation studies and to regularly submit reports in connection with disarmament education.**

C. Exchange of views on the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

35. Although the Board had concluded its deliberations on the conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and provided the Secretary-General with a set of recommendations at its session in February, members felt the need to discuss the outcome of the Review Conference at its following session in July.

36. Consequently, at its fifty-fourth session, Board members exchanged opinions on the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Board member Nobuyasu Abe presented an assessment paper of the Review Conference at the session.

37. The outcome of the Review Conference was seen as the result of an overall positive review process from 2005 to 2010 within the established framework of a constructive international climate that had recently been achieved. The 2010 Review Conference was also seen as successful when compared with the 2005 Review Conference. The need to maintain the positive momentum was stressed by many Board members.

38. The Board praised the efforts of the Secretary-General prior to and during the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Members voiced strong support for the Secretary-General's continued advocacy role in promoting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Members also appreciated the fact that the Secretary-General had mentioned the role of the Advisory Board in his inaugural statement to the Review Conference.

39. The Board mentioned that, as the voice of the international community, the Secretary-General should help to maintain the consensus attained at the Review Conference, given his unique position to appeal to all States, at the highest political level, to pay more attention to the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was suggested that the Secretary-General also act as the preserver of the spirit of the 2010 Review Conference and the bridge-builder between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

40. In connection with the tasks assigned to the Secretary-General in the follow-on actions in the Final Document of the Review Conference, the Board stressed his special responsibility in convening the high-level meeting in September 2010 in support of the work of the Conference on Disarmament. It was emphasized that efforts should be made to avoid confrontations. It was also suggested that the Secretary-General encourage States to preserve the delicate consensus and to implement the recommendations agreed at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

41. The Board stated that priority should also be given to the implementation of the 1995 resolution of the Review Conference on the Middle East and the convening of a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Despite the difficulties and risks, an early initiation of the process was considered important.

42. The Board emphasized the key role of the Secretary-General in organizing the proposed conference and in giving legitimacy to such a complex enterprise. It was suggested that the Secretary-General could consider availing himself of a group of experts from various institutions in order to have access to independent and objective views on the issue.

43. Other significant comments expressed on the issue included the need for early ratification of the new START Treaty, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the beginning of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and discussions on negative-security assurances in the Conference on Disarmament. The need to strengthen transparency in the nuclear field in view of the possible role of the Secretary-General in fostering wider transparency by nuclear-weapon States, including in the area of sub-strategic weapons, was also suggested.

III. Meeting with the Secretary-General

44. The Board had a meeting with the Secretary-General on 24 February 2010, during which Board members took the opportunity to exchange views with the Secretary-General on issues related to multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation.

IV. Presentations by civil society/non-governmental organizations

45. As is customary, the Board heard presentations on issues pertaining to its agenda from representatives of non-governmental organizations during both of its sessions. On issues related to nuclear disarmament and the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, presentations were made at the fifty-third session by Ray Acheson, Project Director of Reaching Critical Will, and John Burroughs, Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy.

46. At the fifty-fourth session, Beatrice Fihn, Project Associate at Reaching Critical Will, and Peter Herby, Head of the Arms Unit in the Legal Division of the International Committee of the Red Cross, briefed the Board on issues pertaining to

disarmament education and international humanitarian law and the use of nuclear weapons, respectively.

V. Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

47. At its fifty-third session, the Advisory Board, sitting as the Board of Trustees, received a comprehensive briefing from both the Director and the Deputy Director on the work of the Institute since the previous session of the Board in July 2009 and on its planned activities for 2010. The Board commended the work carried out by UNIDIR, expressed support for its research activities and reiterated the importance of the Institute maintaining its independence.

48. The Board formally adopted the Institute's 2010 programme of work and budget (see A/64/261), which had been presented at the Board's fifty-second session, held in Geneva in July 2009, taking into account the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in its updated report on the proposed programme of work and budget for 2010-2011 (A/64/7/Add.7).

49. At the Board's fifty-fourth session, both the Director and the Deputy Director of the Institute briefed Board members on the work undertaken by UNIDIR since its previous meeting. A subcommittee on UNIDIR, consisting of five Board members, met prior to the regular session, on 6 July, to review the Institute's programme in detail.

50. After considering the draft report of the Director on the Institute's activities for the period from August 2009 to July 2010 and the programme of work and estimated budget for 2010 and 2011, the Board approved the report of the Institute for submission to the General Assembly.

51. Members of the Board expressed continued strong support for the activities of UNIDIR, particularly in view of its thirtieth anniversary. Members also considered ways to strengthen the Institute's research programmes and fund-raising activities.

52. In its capacity as the Board of Trustees, the Board urged the Secretary-General to use all the influence at his disposal to secure the increase of the subvention in the regular budget of the United Nations for UNIDIR to, at a minimum, fully fund all core staff costs, as a requisite for providing the stability needed to allow the Institute to pursue the structure and programme of work justified by its vision and mission. It also urged the Secretary-General to indicate in strong language the extraordinary value of the Institute remaining a stand-alone, autonomous research institution, thereby advancing the objective value of the role of the Secretary-General and the United Nations in pursuing a world made more safe and secure by advances in the area of disarmament.

VI. Future work

53. The Board exchanged views on a number of possible issues for discussion at its sessions in 2011, including a broad range of issues such as the general concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and

the proposed conference in 2012, the trade and trafficking of conventional arms, the 2011 Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention, the maintenance of strategic stability, export control regimes such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group and conventional disarmament in the context of the rapidly changing environment in new technologies.

54. Possible specific topics suggested were (a) the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, in the wider context of nuclear-weapon-free zones; (b) the conventional arms trade, in particular, the arms trade treaty and the trafficking of small arms and light weapons; and (c) the 2011 Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention. The need to balance the deliberations of the Board in 2011 between issues related to conventional and nuclear or weapons of mass destruction was widely stressed.

Annex

Members of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

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[a] Participated in both the Board's fifty-third and fifty-fourth session.
[b] Participated in the Board's fifty-fourth session only.

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